

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2062

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IS, GW, XF
SUBJECT: VISIT OF FRG FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER TO ISRAEL

REF: TEL AVIV 1747 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: GENSCHER'S VISIT TO ISRAEL WAS A PART
OF HIS RECENT SERIES OF VISITS TO THE MIDDLE EAST TO
ENCOURAGE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. HE REPORTED TO HIS
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ISRAELI HOSTS ON HIS VISITS TO ARAB CAPITALS AND
LISTENED TO ISRAELI RESPONSES TO THE ARAB POSITIONS.
HE CHARACTERIZED THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY AS ONE OF
"FLANKING SUPPORT" TO THE U.S. EFFORT. FEW BILATERAL
ISSUES WERE DISCUSSED. END SUMMARY

1. THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR (PER FISCHER) HAS GIVEN

US THE FOLLOWING REPORT ON THE VISIT BY FRG FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER TO ISRAEL MARCH 16-18. (ISRAELI OFFICIALS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE VISIT HAVE BEEN UNAVAILABLE, BUT WE WILL REPORT ANYTHING WE ARE ABLE TO OBTAIN FROM THEM WHICH DIFFERS FROM THIS ACCOUNT.) THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT SHOULD BE SEEN IN THE FRAMEWORK OF HIS RECENT VISITS TO OTHER MIDDLE EASTERN CAPITALS AND THE SERIES OF VISITS HAD BEEN UNDERTAKEN TO ENCOURAGE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. GENSCHER FELT THAT HIS TRAVEL WOULD BE A VISIBLE SIGN OF THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE FRG, AS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY, IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE DID NOT BRING NEW IDEAS OR PROGRAMS FOR DISCUSSION.

2. GENSCHER BELIEVED THAT HIS VISITS TO THE CAPITALS COULD PROVIDE A MEANS FOR EACH PARTY TO EXPLAIN TO THE OTHER WHERE IT STOOD ON QUESTIONS OF PEACE. IN THAT CONNECTION, HE TOLD THE ISRAELIS THAT IT WAS HIS CONVICTION THAT IN ALL ARAB CAPITALS THERE EXISTS A SINCERE WILL TO ARRIVE AT A DURABLE AND FIAR SETTLEMENT. HE HAD EMPHASIZED TO HIS ARAB HOSTS THAT A NECESSARY PRE-REQUISITE FOR PEACE WAS THEIR RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL. THIS RECOGNITION IS PARTICULARLY REQUIRED OF THE PLO. GENSCHER TOLD THE ISRAELIS THAT THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS HAD ALL AGREED WITH HIM BUT HAD MADE CLEAR THAT THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE PLO IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO BRING ABOUT ANY QUICK CHANGE IN THAT

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ORGANIZATION'S VIEW OF ISRAEL. NONE OF THE THREE ARAB GOVERNMENTS PRESSED THE FRG TO RECOGNIZE THE PLO AND ALL OF THEM WERE LESS ENTHUSIASTIC THAN GENSCHER HAD ANTICIPATE ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF AND INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE.

3. THE ARAB GOVERNMENT CONVEYED TO GENSCHER THEIR GREAT DISTRUST OF SOVIET INFLUENCE; HE FOUND THIS PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY IN SYRIA. THE ARABS ALL TOLD GENSCHER THAT THEY LOOKED TO THE UNITED STATES AS THE PRIMARY MEDIATOR IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THAT THEY WERE CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE SOVIET INFLUENCE AT GENEVA. THEY FAVORED A GENEVA CONFERENCE, HOWEVER, AND TOLD HIM PRIVATELY THAT THE DATE OF THE CONVENING OF GENEVA WAS NOT URGENT. THEY REALIZED THAT THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS AND TALKS BETWEEN ARAB LEADERS AND PRESIDENT CARTER MUST OCCUR FIRST. THE ARABS AGREED THERE MUST BE A CLARIFICATION OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES AND THAT ANY GENEVA CONFERENCE MUST BE WELL

PREPARED. GENSCHER SAID HE FOUND A DIFFERENCE AMONG THE THREE GOVERNMENTS ON THE PROCEDURAL QUESTION OF HOW THE PALESTINIANS SHOULD BE REPRESENTED, WITH EGYPT FAVORING AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN DELEGATION, SYRIA FAVORING A SINGLE ARAB DELEGATION WHICH WOULD INCLUDE THE PALESTINIANS, AND JORDAN FAVORING A JOINT JORDANIAN/PALESTINIAN DELEGATION.

4. AMBASSADOR FISCHER SAID THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD EXPRESSED THEIR THANKS TO GENSCHER FOR THIS SUMMARY OF ARAB VIEWS AND ASKED THAT THE GERMANS PASS THEIR VIEWS BACK TO THE ARAB CAPITALS. THEIR VIEWS IN RESPONSE TO GENSCHER'S COMMENTS SHOWED NO VARIATION FROM THEIR WELL-KNOWN POSITIONS: NO PLO AT GENEVA; A JOINT JORDANIAN/PALESTINIAN DELEGATION; NO INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE; FULL NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS AS PART OF PEACE; AND DEFENSIBLE
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BORDERS. THE ISRAELIS TOLD GENSCHER THEY DID NOT AGREE WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S DISTINCTION BETWEEN NATIONAL AND DEFENSIBLE BORDERS (TEL AVIV 2020). A REPORT OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS REGARDING A PALESTINIAN HOMELAND WAS RECEIVED DURING THE TALKS WITH GENSCHER AND AMBASSADOR FISCHER SAID HE NOTED THAT THE INITIAL REACTION BY THE ISRAELIS WAS UNFAVORABLE.

5. GENSCHER ALSO DISCUSSED WITH THE ISRAELIS HIS CONCEPT OF THE POSSIBLE ROLE THE COMMUNITY CAN PLAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE EC HAS NO WISH TO BE A MEDIATOR; IT SEES ITS ROLE AS THAT OF PROVIDING "FLANKING SUPPORT" TO THE MAIN U.S. EFFORT.

6. THE ISRAELIS BEGAN THEIR RESPONSE TO THIS POINT BY SAYING THAT THE ROLE OF EUROPE SHOULD BE AN ECONOMIC ROLE ONLY. THEY PRAISED THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND THE MASHRAK COUNTRIES AS POINTING THE WAY TO ECONOMIC COOPERATION BUT EXPRESSED THEIR RESERVATIONS ABOUT ANY EUROPEAN POLITICAL ROLE. HOWEVER, AFTER GENSCHER HAD MADE HIS PRESENTATION AND HAD ARGUED ON THIS POINT, THE ISRAELIS CHANGED THEIR STATEMENTS SOMEWHAT AND SAID THAT AN ECONOMIC ROLE HAD SOME POLITICAL CONNOTATIONS AND THERE WAS NO DESIRE TO EXCLUDE EUROPE FROM HELPFUL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE PEACE. THE GERMANS BELIEVE THAT SOME ISRAELI MISGIVINGS STILL EXIST ON THIS POINT BECAUSE THEY REPEATED THEIR WARNING THAT THE EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE COULD BECOME POLITICAL RATHER THAN ECONOMIC.

7. THE ISRAELIS RAISED THE SUBJECT OF THE "LONDON PAPER"--THE DECLARATION DRAWN UP BY THE EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON JANUARY 31--AND SAID IT WAS CLEARLY NOT TO ISRAEL'S LIKING. GENSCHER NOTED CONFIDENTIAL

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SIMPLY THAT THE PAPER HAD NOT BEEN PUBLISHED, THAT IT WOULD BE REVIEWED AFTER MIDDLE EAST LEADERS HAVE VISITED WASHINGTON, AND THAT IT MIGHT THEN BE ISSUED AS A STATEMENT OF COMMON EC POLICY ON THE MIDDLE EAST.

8. THERE WAS ONLY MARGINAL DISCUSSION OF BILATERAL ISSUES. THE ISRAELIS REQUESTED ADDITIONAL AID AND GENSCHER TOLD THEM THIS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE. THEY ALSO REQUESTED A REVIEW OF A RECENT CHANGE IN THE METHOD OF PAYMENT OF GERMAN AID AND GENSCHER SAID HE WOULD EXAMINE THIS REQUEST. THE ISRAELIS REQUESTED RECONSIDERATION OF A RECENT GERMAN DECISION REGARDING PENSION PAYMENTS AND GENSCHER PROMISED TO SPEAK WITH THE MINISTERS CONCERNED. ISRAELI REQUESTS ON TRADE AND NTBS WERE REFERRED TO THE GERMAN-ISRAELI ECONOMIC COMMITTEE.

9. AMBASSADOR FISCHER SAID THE EXCELLENT PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE TWO MINISTERS (THEY HAVE NOW MET ON NINE DIFFERENT OCCASIONS) CLEARLY WAS THE BASIS FOR THE SMOOTH AND HARMONIOUS DISCUSSIONS EVEN WHEN THERE WAS DISAGREEMENT ON SOME POINTS OF SUBSTANCE. GENSCHER EMPHASIZED THAT HE HAD NOT COME TO OFFER ADVICE BUT TO SHARE THE THOUGHTS OF A FRIEND WHO WANTS TO HELP. ALLON RESPONDED TO THIS BY SAYING THAT ISRAEL CANNOT IGNORE THE VIEWS OF GOOD FRIENDS SUCH AS GENSCHER AND VANCE AND THAT THE JUDGMENTS OF THOSE FRIENDS REGARDING POSITIONS HELD IN THE ARAB CAPITALS ARE IMPORTANT TO ISRAEL.
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